

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

PAGE 01 STATE 259383

13

ORIGIN INR-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 NEA-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 /028 R

66604

DRAFTED BY INR/RAA:EMSCOTT

11/25/74 EXT. 20688

APPROVED BY INR:MPACKMAN

AF - ROBERT BARRETT

NEA - EDWARD WALKER

EUR - TERRELL OTIS

----- 109675

R 251737Z NOV 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

S E C R E T STATE 259383

NO FOREIGN DISSEM

FOLLOWING SENT TOKYO FROM SECSTATE WASHDC 24 NOV 74:

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 259383

TOSEC 412

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ET, PINS, PINT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 259383

SUBJECT: INR/AF ASSESSMENT OF ETHIOPIAN SITUATION

1. FOLLOWING PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF STILL MURKY SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA, BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE AS OF 1600 EST, NOVEMBER 24.

2. THE RULING PROVISIONAL MILITARY COUNCIL (PMC), CONTROLLED BY A GROUP OF YOUNG OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN, ANNOUNCED ON NOVEMBER 24 THAT IT HAD EXECUTED 62 CIVILIAN AND MILITARY DETAINEES AND HOSTAGES, INCLUDING TOP OFFICIALS OF THE OLD REGIME AND SUSPECTED PLOTTERS WITHIN THE PMC. AMONG THOSE KILLED WERE GENERAL AMAN, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PMC; FORMER PRIME MINISTER ENDALKACHEW MAKONNEN; ADMIRAL DESTA, THE EMPEROR'S GRANDSON; BUT NOT THE EMPEROR HIMSELF.

3. IT IS UNCLEAR WHO IS IN CONTROL. MAJOR MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM, THE 36-YEAR-OLD DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE PMC, MAY INHERIT AMAN'S TITLE. BUT THE INNER CORE OF THE PMC, TO WHICH MENGISTU REPORTEDLY BELONGS, REMAINS ANONYMOUS.

4. THE KILLINGS WERE APPARENTLY TRIGGERED BY A POWER

STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE PMC AND AMAN. WE DO NOT KNOW ALL THE REASONS FOR THAT STRUGGLE BUT THEY MAY HAVE INCLUDED ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:

--(A) AMAN MAY HAVE MADE A BID AMONG HIS SUPPORTERS IN THE PMC--MOSTLY ENLISTED MEN AND NCO'S--TO ACHIEVE POWER COMMENSURATE WITH HIS TITLE. HE CHAFED AT TAKING ORDERS FROM YOUNGER OFFICERS AND DISAGREED WITH KEY PMC POLICIES, PARTICULARLY TOWARD HIS OWN PROVINCE OF ERITREA.

--(B) AT THE SAME TIME, THE PMC MAY HAVE FEARED THAT PRO-MONARCHIST ELEMENTS MIGHT HAVE USED AMAN TO STAGE A COMEBACK.

--(C) AS THE PMC TRIED TO STREAMLINE ITS DECISION-MAKING DURING THE PAST TWO WEEKS, AMAN RESISTED A PROPOSAL TO
SECRET
SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 259383

REDUCE THE 120-MAN MEMBERSHIP TO AS FEW AS 15 OF THE BEST-EDUCATED JUNIOR OFFICERS AND TO SEND THE ENLISTED MEN AND NCO'S BACK TO THEIR UNITS. THE INCREASING SELF-CONFIDENCE OF THE YOUNGER OFFICERS IN THE PMC AND THEIR REPORTED WILLINGNESS TO SURFACE AS A JUNTA REDUCED THE NEED FOR AMAN, WHO SERVED AS A UNIFYING SYMBOL FOR THE MILITARY DURING THE PLANNING FOR THE EMPEROR'S DEPOSITION.

--(D) ANOTHER DISAGREEMENT DEVELOPED OVER ERITREA:

AMAN WANTED A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT; THE PMC WANTED A STEPPING UP OF MILITARY ACTION FOLLOWING THE ERITREAN SPURNING OF THE PMC'S PUBLICLY PROFERRED SOLUTION (INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE GUARANTEE OF EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL ETHIOPIANS WITHIN A REFORMED POLITY). THE PMC WILL NOT COUNTENANCE CONTINUING DEMANDS FOR A SEPARATE STATE AND HAVE SENT REINFORCEMENTS TO DEAL WITH A DETERIORATING MILITARY SITUATION.

--(E) AMAN MAY ALSO HAVE DRAGGED HIS HEELS ON INTERNAL REFORMS. HE WAS MORE CONSERVATIVE THAN THE YOUNGER OFFICERS AND SUSPECT BECAUSE OF HIS CLOSE PERSONAL TIES WITH HAILE SELASSIE.

5. A POPULAR REACTION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE IS UNLIKELY. THE POPULACE IN ADDIS ABABA IS STILL STUNNED BY THE NEWS, ALTHOUGH LABOR TROUBLE MAY BE BREWING.

6. THE KEY QUESTION, HOWEVER, IS THE REACTION OF THE REST OF THE MILITARY TO THE KILLINGS. REPORTS OF

OPPOSITION FROM UNITS IN ADDIS ABABA AND IN THE OUTLYING AREAS ARE COMING IN, BUT WE DO NOT YET HAVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION TO JUDGE WHAT FORM THIS OPPOSITION MAY TAKE OR HOW SERIOUS IT MAY BE. A SERIOUS MILITARY SPLIT WOULD LEAD TO CIVIL WAR.

7. THE SUMMARY NATURE OF THE EXECUTIONS SUGGESTS THAT ETHIOPIA'S MILITARY RULERS MAY ABANDON THEIR GRADUALIST TACTICS AND STEP UP THE PACE OF THE REVOLUTION. MORE RADICAL POLICIES BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD MAY BE FORTH-

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 259383

COMING.

8. THE APPARENT RISE TO PREDOMINANCE WITHIN THE PMC OF THE OPPONENTS OF GENERAL AMAN COULD POSE PROBLEMS FOR THE UNITED STATES. WHILE THEY ARE STILL LARGELY ANONYMOUS AND HAVE NOT TIPPED THEIR HAND WITH REGARD TO FOREIGN POLICY, OTHER THAN TO STRESS THEIR SUPPORT FOR A POLICY OF "STRICT" NON-ALIGNMENT, IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT THEY WILL NOT ADOPT THE ESSENTIALLY PRO-AMERICAN STANCE FOLLOWED BY PREDECESSOR GOVERNMENTS. THIS IS APT TO BE PARTICULARLY TRUE IN THE FIELD OF MILITARY SUPPLIES FOR ETHIOPIA. THE FIRST MANIFESTATION OF THIS NEW ORIENTATION MAY BE TO PROOE GENUINENESS OF SOVIET OFFER OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT REPORTEDLY FIRST MADE A FEW MONTHS AGO. INGERSOLL UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRET
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE259383
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EMSCOTT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741113/aaaaakvn.tel
Line Count: 166
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN INR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <20-Nov-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INR/AF ASSESSMENT OF ETHIOPIAN SITUATION
TAGS: PINS, PINT, ET
To: ABIDJAN ACCRA CAIRO DAR ES SALAAM JIDDA KHARTOUM KINSHASA LAGOS LONDON MOGADISHU
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005